



# The Encourager

A Newsletter from El Bethel Baptist Church

May 10 is Mother's Day. What a special time to stop and think about our Mothers.

If you are seeking a place to serve, worship, and contribute to the Kingdom of God, we sincerely pray that God will lead you to join our fellowship at El Bethel.

Mothers have a special way  
Of saying, 'I love you',  
A love that God has given them,  
A love that will hold true  
For Mothers sacrifice so much,  
Providing for the home,  
Creating there an atmosphere  
That reflects God's love alone.

C.S. Lowdes

## Join us this Sunday

### Sunday

Sunday School 9:30 am  
Worship 10:30 am  
Adult Choir 5:00 pm  
Children's Time 6:00 pm  
Worship 6:00 pm

### Tuesday

Care & Grow 6:30 pm

### Wednesday (August-May)

Meal 5:00pm  
Awana 6:00 pm  
Youth 6:30 pm  
Worship 6:30 pm

### Wednesday (June-July)

Children 6:30pm  
Youth 6:30pm  
Bible Study 6:30pm

## Leadership Team

Pastor	Rev. Ron Cooper
Associate/Youth Pastor	Justin Cunningham
Worship Leader	Tracy Hicks
Children	Tammy Kerley
Senior Adult	Barbara Hart

Many of you know that I have been sick the last two weeks and ended up with pneumonia in my left lung. We went out Saturday night and as we were getting in the car I told Debbie, I can still hear my mom saying, "Ronnie, what are you doing out in air like this?" When we are raising our families I don't know if we really think about the things we should say that we want our children to remember about us.

Sometimes I recall my mom under stressful situations and with a higher pitch saying, "DARRELL" and I knew my dad had done something wrong. But, while I remember some of her funnier sayings, it is her serious ones that really stay with me. When something serious came up she would say, "We need to pray about that." That helped mold in me and my sister the importance of prayer, and when we face a situation that is difficult there is an automatic turn to God for direction and help.

In her example by every morning reading her Bible, she taught me the importance of Scripture in my life. That is something I hope I am able to impress on our Church family to automatically think, "What does the Bible say about that?" The Bible is our sole authority for our faith and practice.

By her example she also taught me the importance of being faithful to the Church. If she missed a service, or if we as children missed a service it was because we were really sick. Too often we allow Church attendance to be something we take lightly. The Lord says, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another and so much the more as you see the day approaching." Hebrews 10:25. My mom wanted me to be faithful to Church, but even more is the fact that the Lord expects us to be faithful to Church.

One of the things that impressed me most about my Mom as she grew older was hearing her talk about inviting people to Church. At her funeral, several people came up to me and told me they were coming to High Peak Church because of my mom's invitation for them to come. She would contact people who had been out and see if they were doing OK and let them know they were missed.

I also remember those three sweet words, "I love you." That is an amazing gift to pass on to our children and our Church family. So many people need to hear those words and go weeks without hearing them. I pray that we will seek to pass God's love on to others.

Mothers are teachers. Teaching their children, and teaching those who are watching their lives. May God help each of us to realize that we also are teaching. We are leading people to a closer relationship to God, or we are a hindrance in them coming to and growing in the Lord.

May is a busy month, be sure to read your bulletin for special events coming up. Pray for our students as they finish out the school year. Continue to pray for revival in our land.

Love and prayers,

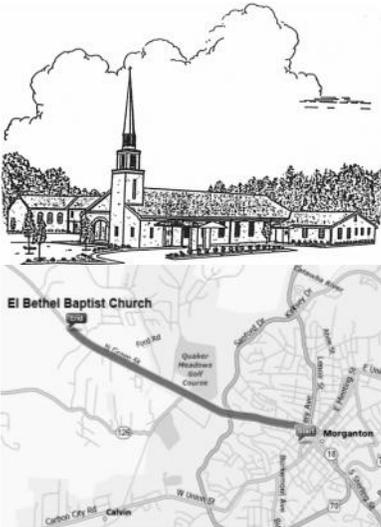
Pastor Ron

EBBC

PO BOX 2518

Morganton, NC 28680

828.437.0570



*Ladies Hat Day*  
*Mother's Day—May 10th*

All ladies are invited to adorn  
 your best hat as we  
 celebrate the  
 special women in our lives!

- Michael Bedard May 1
- Larry Leonhardt May 2
- Brett Bedard May 4
- Hannah Bailey May 5
- Chelsea Greene May 5
- Jan Mosely May 6
- Wilson Crawley May 7
- Jessica Epley May 9
- Cheryl Miller May 9
- Harold Smith May 9
- Gayle Walden May 9
- Alan Hicks May 10
- Ashley Powell May 11
- Barbara Miller May 13
- Pete Richards May 14

*Happy Birthday*



- Donna Wells May 15
- Steve Whisenant May 15
- Geraldine Whisenant May 15
- Billy Duckworth May 17
- Tisha Fisher May 18
- Carolyn Leonhardt May 19
- Larry Rice May 19
- Caleb Greene May 25
- Dallas Winters May 25
- Kate Baker May 28
- Donald Kincaid May 29
- Brandi Morgan May 31

## 55 and Alive by Barbara Hart

Mother's Day-----a great day to honor our mothers. If God had not created motherhood, none of us would be here today. When my children were young, Mother's Day was MY holiday. I was Queen for the day. Austin and the kiddos treated me with breakfast in bed. After church service, I got to choose the restaurant where we ate. Then we would spend the afternoon together. All was very special to me, just as it should be for all mothers.

Get in touch with your Mother on Mother's Day. Let her know she's special. Tell her you love her and then, give her a great big hug. That will mean more than any gift.

I never knew my birth mother. She died when I was only two. When I see her in Heaven, it will be a glorious time.

Please don't take your mother for granted. Time flies and one day, she'll be gone. The opportunity to remind her you love and honor her will then be gone. Your mother should be an extra special person in your life.

The Seniors of El Bethel made a trip to the N. C. Transportation Museum in Spencer on April 21. This was very interesting. Lots of trains and beautiful antique automobiles. We had a great time. Plus, we made the maiden voyage in the new church bus. Very comfortable.

A trip is planned to go to Grandfather Mountain and museum on May 19...Meet at the church at 9:00. You are invited to go if you are 55 or older. Should be an informative excursion.

Now, to all mothers in El Bethel, I wish you a very HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!!!! All are QUEENS in my book. God bless each and every one.

Ever in His Service,  
Barbara

## Mother's Day



Sunday, May 10th  
Mothers—We appreciate you!

Happy  
MOTHER'S  
DAY

## May Nursery Workers

May 3 <sup>rd</sup> :	Lisa McGinnis, Danette Bracket and Susan Lambert
May 10 <sup>th</sup> :	Rebecca Griffith and Tisha Fisher
May 17 <sup>th</sup> :	Renee Whisenant, Jennifer and Matt Miller
May 24 <sup>th</sup> :	Lisa Ervin, Hannah Clark, and Chelsea Greene
May 31 <sup>st</sup> :	Cheryl and David Miller, Debbie and Dallas Miller

## A Note of Thanks

Dear Church Family,

I just want to thank you for the love and support you all showed to me on April 19th at the Cupcake Fund-raiser. Thank you to Angel Stamey, Morgan Webb and Carolyn Leonhardt for your sweet donations! I hope everyone enjoyed the cupcakes! The Lord truly blessed the sale because we raised almost \$1,000 for my summer internship in New York. It is going to be a tremendous summer! I love you all!

Lara Hicks

## Music Notes by Tracy Hicks—the story behind the song...

In honor of our Mothers this month I have the story being the children's song, "Jesus Loves Me." It was always a favorite to sing as a child—probably the first song that I learned to sing. How amazing to find that it is still being sung by children and adults over 150 years after it was written. Happy Mother's Day to all our mothers! Hope you enjoy this incredible story!

### Jesus Loves Me

Anna and Susan Warner lived in a lovely townhouse in New York City where their father, Henry Whiting Warner, was a successful lawyer. But the "Panic of 1837" wrecked the family's finances, forcing them to move into a ramshackle Revolutionary War-era home on Constitution Island on the Hudson, right across from the Military Academy at West Point.

Needing to contribute to the family income, Anna and Susan began writing poems and stories for publication. Ann wrote "Robinson Crusoe's Farmyard," and Susan wrote, "The Wide, Wide World." The girls thus

launched parallel literary careers, which resulted in 106 publications, 18 of them co-authored.

One of their most successful joint projects was a novel titled "Say and Seal" in which a little boy named Johnny Fox is dying.

His Sunday school teacher, John Linden, comforts him by taking him in his arms, rocking him, and making up a little song: "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so ..."

The novel became a best-seller, second only to "Uncle Tom's Cabin"; and when hymn writer William Bradbury read the words of John Linden's little song (written by Anna), he composed a childlike, musical score to go along with them. "Jesus Loves Me" soon became the best-known children's hymn on earth.

Despite their success, the Warner sisters never seemed able to recover from the staggering financial reverses of 1836.

Years later a friend wrote, "One day when sitting with Miss Anna in the old living room, she took from one of the cases a shell so delicate that it looked like lace work, and holding it in her hand, with eyes dimmed with tears, she said, 'There was a time when I was very perplexed, bills were unpaid, necessities must be had, and someone sent me this exquisite thing. As I held it I realized that if God could make this beautiful home for a little creature, He would take care of me.'"

For 40 years, Susan and Anna conducted Bible classes for cadets at West Point, and both were buried with full military honors. They are the only civilians buried in the military cemetery at West Point. To this day, their home on Constitution Island is maintained by West Point as a museum to their memory.

*Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so; Little ones to Him belong, they are weak but He is strong.*

*Yes, Jesus loves me,*

*Yes, Jesus loves me,*

*Yes, Jesus loves me,*

*The Bible tells me so.*

## Trechomen 5K

Saturday, May 23rd

7:00 AM - Runner Registration

8:00 AM - One Mile Fun Run/Walk

8:30 AM - 5K

Catawba Meadows Park

Register today online at [www.elbethelchurch.net](http://www.elbethelchurch.net) under the Trechomen tab or with the paper application in the church office. We need volunteers to help with this event! See Justin or Joanna if you would like to help!

# Missionaries to Ecuador—Ryan and Erica Coryell

On Saturday we (at El Refugio) put on our first-ever Mud Race! We decided to put on the race as a way to raise money for the camp as well as advertise Hacienda El Refugio to the community; we had over 800 participants and volunteers!!

The day went perfectly; no one was seriously injured, it remained sunny throughout the day (during the rainy season!), and almost all feedback was positive. Praise God!

Nevertheless we didn't leave the day without our share of funny stories, lost shoes, and scraped elbows. When you have that many people, and add mud to boot, it makes for an interesting experience.

We had decided to open the race up to kids as young as five years old to run with their parents. It was a great team building and bonding time...

Well...for most of the families anyway.

As soon as the race started they were off! Running up and down dirt mounds, crawling through trenches, swimming around the duck pond...

The parents of two kids were taking this mud race seriously. And they were doing it well. Nevermind that they had brought their kids along. Once they started running it was as if they were the only ones in the world. And their young kids? They were straggling far behind.

Before you start to worry, I'll add that it didn't take long for one of our interns to notice them off by themselves. He decided to look out for them, and just for fun see how long it took the parents to realize that they had left their small children to fend for themselves on an obstacle course that includes fire, water, and barbed wire.

After several obstacles, the intern decided it was time to remind the parents that they were just that: parents. Running up ahead he called to them and mentioned that their kids were back at the previous obstacle, to which they responded, "The kids!!" They reunited quickly and ran the remainder of the course together, as was the original purpose.

A humorous story, but it's also a reminder of how easy is it for us to lose sight of our mission. The mission is not to finish the race quickly. It's to finish with as many other brothers and sisters (and in this case, children) as possible.

May we run towards Christ together.

-Erica

## Pray for El Bethel

Thursday Nights at 9pm—  
wherever you are

Sunday Mornings at 9am— in  
the Library

Join us in prayer each Thurs-  
day and Sunday as we ask  
God to move here at

El Bethel.

## Bus Fund

Please make note of the special  
envelopes in each Sunday School  
Classroom

These are for you to place any  
extra money (above your tithes  
and offerings) that you would  
like to go towards the bus that El  
Bethel would like to purchase for  
our growing needs!

## El Bethel Cookbooks

A reorder of the El Bethel Cook-  
books have arrived. If you would  
like to purchase one please see  
Barbara Powell today! \$10 each  
and they make great gifts! Pro-  
ceeds from the books will go to the  
Haiti Medical Mission.

## Sheet Sale for Haiti

The Haiti Mission Team continues to sell bed sheets as a fundraiser. The sheets are available in twin and full sizes for \$25.00 per set and queen, king, and California king for \$30.00 per set. These sheets are 1200 count micro fiber-material, available in 12 different colors and will make great gifts for special occasions. See Sput or Barbara Powell if you would like to place an order.

# A Mother's Testimony of Faith by Joanna Cunningham

A few weeks ago while playing with Amos in our play yard I received a text from Justin. It was a forward that read...*I have a special prayer request... Tracy Heape a 5th grade teacher at OHES and her 1 year old son have been rushed to Levine's Children's Hospital this morning with a serious infection that has become septic. He is in critical condition. The power of prayer is amazing please pray for Parker.* At that moment Amos and I went to our knees and breathed a word of prayer for Parker. I had never met Parker but had gotten to know his mom and dad while Justin was a teacher at Oak Hill. Over the next week Parker would be the focus of my prayers and he would begin to weave a very special place in my heart.

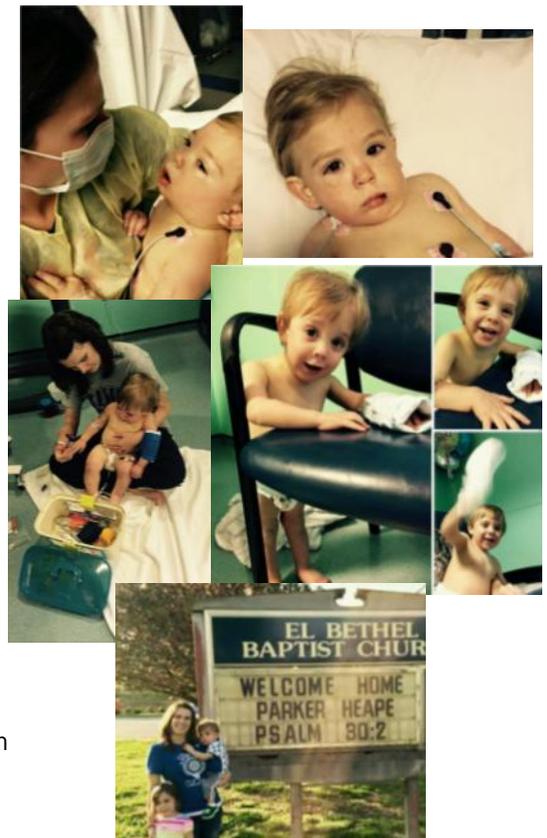
Parker was very sick...so sick that in the course of hours he would enter the doors of Grace, Mission, Levine and Duke Hospitals. As the updates came and the news did not look very good. One of the updates said that little Parker would likely need a liver transplant, they began to do tests on his mom to see if she was a match for him. Needless to say Parker was a very sick little boy. He was on a lot of sedatives, a ventilator, top of the transplant list and many different levels were not in normal range in his body. I am a mother of a one year old and my heart was heavy. I would pray very specific prayers for Parker...everything from, "God let Parker wake from the seda-

tives, to God, please let Parker do #2 to flush his system from the bad stuff, to God, please just HEAL Parker so that he doesn't even need to have the transplant.

I knew that the last prayer might be considered a long shot to many...but I knew that my God is a BIG God and that he could do it! Daily I prayed, daily Amos prayed, daily Justin prayed...and daily God began to answer prayers. Renee Bailey would send me Facebook post that Tracy would send as updates on Parker's condition. Daily little Parker was getting better! My heavy heart was lightened and God began to remind me of my prayers...that he had answered!

God, worked in my life through a child that wasn't even my own. Through a mother that I had gotten to know in only brief encounters. He showed me that he is still a GREAT God who is still on his throne! He showed me that so often we don't have because we don't ask!!! He showed me what a mother of faith looks like through Parker's mom, who on every Facebook post would add a Bible verse and ask people to keep on praying! One post said..."Keep praying!!! We want to bring this boy home and share his story!!!" I am thankful for mothers who look beyond where they are in the moment and see how God can use their situation. Mother's who are selfless, mother's who pray, mothers who live by faith. I see these

qualities in my mother, in many ladies here at our church and in Tracy...my prayer is that I am that kind of mother so that Amos and Paisley will want to be Christ followers! Below I have attached some of the pics of Parker's journey. What a testimony of faith this family has to share! A true miracle!



## Psalm 30:2 (NIV)

<sup>2</sup> LORD my God, I called to you for help, and you healed me.

## Camp Caswell

This year we have asked the youth to pay the full price of Camp Caswell for a total \$296 per person. The first deposit was \$180 and some youth have come up short. Many of our youth come from families with multiple kids in youth group.

If you would like to assist a youth with Camp Caswell this year, you have a couple of options. You can pick the youth you want to sponsor or let me assign it as I see fit.

Any amount will help. Almost all of the youth have worked hard and have some credit from our fundraisers and do not need the full amount.

Make your check out to "El Bethel Baptist Church," put "Camp Caswell Scholarship" in the memo line, and give the check to me.

Thank you all for supporting our El Bethel Student Ministry. Camp Caswell is a life-changing opportunity that we want all of our youth to experience!

## Associate Pastor Points by Justin Cunningham

Matthew 13:3-8, 23 the Parable of the Sower

*“A farmer went out to sow his seed. <sup>4</sup> As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. <sup>5</sup> Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. <sup>6</sup> But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. <sup>8</sup> **Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.** <sup>9</sup> Whoever has ears, let them hear.”...**But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.**”*

This year, we have been talking a lot about the Great Commission in the Youth Group. Our motto is “Be Disciples; Make Disciples.” Each week we stress how important it is for us to be a disciple of Christ. To be a disciple requires only one thing, faith. Upon confession of faith, your life is changed and should never be the same. The Holy Spirit begins a great work in you conforming you to look more and more like Christ. Being a disciple begins with the moment of salvation and begins the process of sanctification (being set apart and becoming like Christ).

In the same moment that you are saved, you are commissioned by Christ to be about his business. We are called in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) to make disciples of all nations, to teach them and baptize them. In Youth Group, we love Jesus and want to do what Christ has commissioned us to do. We are compelled by the gospel of Jesus Christ to make disciples.

In the parable of the sower, Christ explains that the seed that falls on good soil produces a crop... 100x, 60x, or 30x what was sown! I had never thought about this parable as a Great Commission text, but it is! Verse 23 says, that the seed falling on good soil is a person who hears and understands the word. Do you hear and understand the word? Good, then let us be about Christ’s business. Let’s produce, 100x, 60x, 30x the crop!

The youth use the 4 I’s to help us fulfill the Great Commission:

IDENTIFY – IDENTIFY those around you who need Christ.

INVEST – INVEST time with them and sharing Christ as the Holy Spirit leads.

INVITE – INVITE them to Jesus (or at least to church); Ask them to accept Jesus as Savior.

INCREASE – Regardless of how they respond, you have INCREASED the number of people who have heard of Jesus Christ!



# Worship for the Ages – Intergenerational Unity by Paul Clark

During Sunday's worship the pastor called forward children who would be attending children's camp the next week. A 70-year-old man wearing coat and tie raised his hand as one of the volunteers who would be working at the camp. Other adults were wearing wristbands with the names of one of these camp-bound children for whom they would pray in the week, including specific prayer for their coming to faith in Christ. Corny? Small church stuff? Not to me! My grandson was one of those standing in that row attending camp this week. I welcome the prayer support of the church.

In consulting with church leaders I often hear concern expressed rooted in generational issues. Concern for reaching young people is a prevalent theme. Popular remedies related to worship run the gamut from segregating worshipers according to age or music preference to tossing out the old music for all worshipers and replacing it with the latest. In a previous post I began to address multi-generational, or intergenerational worship, and closed that post expressing my intention to further address the topic and also to post some resources and ideas for intergenerational worship.

First off, let me say that generational differences are real, and can hardly be ignored when planning worship. Whether considering art forms or technological factors, there is a vast difference in those who grew up with only black & white television and those who have never known a world without computers or cellphones. In the face of generational differences in present-day culture, churches tend to respond in one of three ways when it comes to planning congregational worship:

1. Inherited tradition, in which the congregation seeks to conserve past practices, working to maintain inherited norms.
2. Blended congregation, where a conscious effort is made to appeal to all generations represented in the congregation and community
3. Generation-specific, where worship is designed to address the cultural characteristics and needs of a particular generation or age group. Worshipers from other generations may either be simply discounted, or provided for through separation into their own age-specific alienated environment.

Each of these methods is inherent with inevitable tensions and conflicts. Likewise there are strengths and weaknesses in each approach. I am personally aware of churches who use each approach. Rather than rehashing the pros and cons of each, in keeping with the point of this post I want to contend for the blending of multiple generations worshipping together in a purposefully intergenerational atmosphere, nurtured as such by church leaders and worship planners based upon biblical, theological, and historical values. I am of the deep conviction that true relevance to any generation is rooted in the gospel itself.

## Biblical Values of Intergenerational Worship

The unity of the church – in John 17 Jesus prays that his disciples would be unified as one. Generations worshipping together reflect a spirit of intentional unity. The apostle Paul writes to the Ephesians of one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all in Ephesians 4. Overcoming challenges of preferential differences and generational divides through purposeful bridging demonstrates a desire to be the answer to Jesus' priestly prayer and to follow Paul's instruction and admonition to make every effort to maintain unity.

The pattern of worship – worship throughout scripture included all ages (Exodus 12:26, 13:14, Deuteronomy 29:10-11, Joshua 8:35, 2 Chronicles 20:13, Nehemiah 8:3, Psalm 148:12-13)

A Covenant Community– God's established relationship with His people includes the generations (Genesis 17:7) Praising and teaching are passed from generation to generation throughout the Old Testament. In the New Testament children not only are welcome, but display the very spirit of receptivity as example (Mark 10:13-16) At Pentecost Peter concludes his sermon making clear the inclusive nature of the Spirit (Acts 2:38-39). God deals with people as family units (Acts 16:15,31-34 and 1 Cor 1:16).

Formation– worship forms us as disciples, aligning affection and attention in keeping with the Word of God, the prayers of His people, and the expressions of praise recognizing Who He is. As children we are not born fully formed in faith and character. Maturation occurs best in an intergenerational environment. Moses addresses the need to recite to our children in Deuteronomy 6:6-9. Likewise the psalms are replete with instructions like Psalm 78:1-8, where the passing on to children is heightened. The spirit of relating among generations is seen in Paul's instruction to Timothy in 1 Timothy 5:1-2, where he suggests how to treat older and younger men and women, as he refers also for Titus in Titus 2:1-15. Historically weekly worship is at the core of forming our life in Christ.

Continuing Community– the church is promised continuation rooted in Christ. The church is built on the rock and Christ will build it (Matt 16:18). Matt 28:19 tells us to go in the authority of Jesus' Name, and Acts 1:8 reminds us that He supplies the power for our mission. Our mission is rooted in bringing together in a ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:16-21)

Worship that is genuinely intergenerational is best practiced in a setting where leaders are committed to create an ethos or culture of intergenerational relationships. In those settings genuine caring across generational lines becomes the norm. Each age group considers and expresses value of others intentionally.

# **El Bethel Student Ministry**

## **Summer Missions:**

### **World Changers 2015**

#### **New Orleans**

This summer, the youth of El Bethel will be heading to New Orleans, LA (NOLA) to do mission work with World Changers (WC)! The work includes typical WC jobs, but also the building of wheelchair ramps for houses that were damaged by Katrina and lifted up on stilts.

The youth are super excited about going despite the heat and long 12 hour drive. The itinerary includes spending the night in Biloxi, MS on the way down and Atmore, AL on the way home after a day of sight-seeing in NOLA. The Project Coordinator called and described some of the necessary precautions they take in NOLA to insure the safety of our youth in the heat.

The following list includes all of the missionaries we will be sending to NOLA. Please use this list as a prayer guide. Begin praying now for our youth and adults to be used by God to share the gospel with those in NOLA and to have a safe and fun trip. Also, the price of the trip has increased because of the added distance. If you would like to provide financial assistance to a youth or adult attending, make your check out to El Bethel Baptist Church and give it to Justin.

Scott	Emma H.
Justin	Clark
Chris E.	Eric
Larry	Megan
Alan	Chris M.
Roger	Drew
David	Avery
Lauren C.	Aaron
Susan	Railey
Olivia	Tyler
Elliott	Loren
CJ	Payne
Lillie	Elijah
Braxton	Andrew W
Kourtney	Morgan
Isaiah	